

MFL learning unit: Thinking skills

Resource document

Strategies for developing thinking skills

Advanced organisers

Example: Provide learners with a cut-up version of a model extended text which they translate through a variety of activities and then they re-sequence the text e.g. vocabulary items, tenses, connectives, etc.

Audience and Purpose

Example 1:

The German dramatist Bertolt Brecht used a technique which he called 'der Verfremdungseffekt' – the art of making the familiar strange. This technique can also be helpful in getting learners to think about audience and purpose. By changing the audience and purpose of a typical piece of writing, this technique refocuses learners on the stylistic features and the motivation behind the writing, rather than the content.

For example, imagine rewriting a TV weather report about a whirlwind as an advert: 'Wollen Sie eine Stadt zerstören? Kaufen Sie den neusten Wirbelwind von Windkatastrophe!' or setting a description of a typical weekend as a haiku (a 17-syllable poem, traditionally with lines of 5/7/5 syllables respectively): 'Le weekend est là / Je mange, je dors, je joue et / C'est déjà passé'. Traditional Japanese Haiku can be translated and then reworked into different formats for different audiences – imagine the following reworked as a newspaper article: 'Le voleur / m'a tout emporté, sauf / La lune qui était à ma fenêtre'. In order to really provoke learners into considering what they should include for a specific audience, they should rewrite the same piece in different formats for 3 or 4 different audiences, e.g. a description of a disastrous holiday written as

- (a) a newspaper article
- (b) a radio script
- (c) a recipe and
- (d) an entry in a 'How to' manual.

Example 2

'Role-on-the-wall' is a type of brainstorming activity and allows learners to create a character. An androgenous outline figure is sketched and learners contribute characteristics which go to make up that character. Contributions can be categorised by placing characteristics and character traits within the outline and external factors – either appearance or influences – around the figure.

- learners then have to design a house for three of those people, justifying their designs and writing an advert to promote their designs to the intended audience.
- learners use the 'Making animals' strategy to design the ideal school learner (see Appendix A, page 24). In this strategy, learners have to design an ideal 'something' and have a series of characteristics in the target language from

Example 3:

Audience and purpose

Entwerfen Sie den außerordentlichen Schüler / die außerordentliche Schülerin!

Welche Eigenschaften hat der außerordentlichen Schüler/die außerordentliche Schülerin? Das müssen Sie entwerfen ...aber VORSICHT! ...der Schüler/die Schülerin muss gutes Wissen überall haben! ...das heißt in *jedem* Fachbereich! Sie müssen auch aus dieser Liste die Eigenschaften nehmen (...es gibt zwei freie Möglichkeiten, wenn Sie Ihre eigenen Eigenschaften hinzufügen möchten). Sie können bis sechs Eigenschaften auswählen. Begründen Sie Ihre Eigenschaften. Der außerordentliche Schüler / Die außerordentliche Schülerin

1. ist kreativ	11. ist cool
2. löst Probleme	12. behandelt Leute mit Rücksicht
3. verbindet die Fächer miteinander	13. glaubt, daß es immer noch etwas zu lernen gibt
4. sieht ordentlich aus	14. sieht alles aus einer anderen Sicht
5. ist organisiert	15. benutzt die Kenntnis, die man schon hat
6. ergreift die Initiative	16. ist hart
7. hat hohe Erwartungen	17. ist sauber
8. kümmert sich um Leute	18. arbeitet mit anderen Leuten
9. ist stolz auf die Arbeit	19.
10. ist selbstständig	20

Nummer 1 ist wichtig, weil ...

Ich glaube das Nummer 3 wichtig ist, weil...

Design 'The Outstanding Pupil'

What characterises an outstanding pupil?

You have to design such an outstanding pupil – however, you need to design a pupil who can be outstanding in *all* subject areas. You also have to choose from the list of characteristics below (there are two blank spaces should you wish to add in characteristics of your own). You can choose up to SIX characteristics for your outstanding pupil. Justify your characteristics.

The outstanding pupil ...

1. Is creative	11. Is cool
2. Solves problems	12. Respects others
3. Makes links across topics and sees	13. Believes there is always more to learn connections between subjects
4. Looks tidy	14. Sees everything from a different viewpoint
5. Is organised	15. Uses existing knowledge
6. Takes the initiative	16. Is hard
7. Has high expectations	17. Is clean
8. Is caring	18. Works with others
9. Is proud of their work	19.
10. Is independent	20

Classifying:

a. On bouffe! Data set

1. poulet	10. oignons	19. foie	28. lardons	37. épinards
2. petit-pois	11. porc	20. ananas	29. citrons	38. abricots
3. fraises	12. noix	21. poisson	30. pain	39. fromage
4. jambon	13. confiture	22. cuisses de grenouille	31. bière à pression	40. boeuf
5. glace	14. framboises	23. limonade	32. escargots	41. vin rouge
6. lait	15. l'eau minérale	24. thé	33. coca	42. beurre
7. chou	16. chou-fleur	25. carottes	34. salade	43. laitue
8. pommes	17. pommes de terre	26. champignons	35. gâteau	44. sel
9. chips	18. pâtés	27. bifteck-haché	36. frites	45. cerises

b. Le/la/l'/les ... Du/de la/de l'/des ... Au/à la/ à l'/aux ... – Data set

1. Je joue au foot	7. J'écoute des disques	13. Je bois du coca	19. Mon frère va souvent aux concerts du rock
2. Je vais à la plage	8. Je préfère des chips	14. Mon père boit du vin	20. Je lis le journal
3. Je joue de la guitare	9. Je regarde la télévision	15. Je vais à l'école	21. J'ai les yeux verts
4. Je voudrais de l'Orangina	10. Je vais au cinéma	16. Je vais au collège	22. Tu aimes les lions?
5. Je prends de la limonade	11. Tu prends des frites?	17. Je joue du piano	23. J'habite au Canada
6. Je vais à la piscine	12. J'aime le chocolat	18. Ma soeur habite aux Etats-Unis	24. Il va à la boum

Tenses in German – Data set

GEGENWART, VERGANGENHEIT UND ZUKUNFT

1	Ich bin nach Dover gefahren
13	Wir sind um sieben Uhr abgefahren
4	Mike ist um acht Uhr abends in Hamburg angekommen
18	Sonja hat den Hafen in Hamburg gesehen
10	Wir haben Spass gehabt
17	Ich habe eine deutsche CD gekauft
3	<i>Paul spielt gern Fußball</i>
9	<i>Amy geht manchmal ins Kino</i>
27	<i>Ich lese gern</i>
22	<i>Wir lernen Deutsch zusammen</i>
7	<i>Ich verstehe nicht</i>
26	<i>Ich fahre jeden Tag mit dem Auto zur Schule</i>
2	Die Reise war stürmisch und unangenehm
16	Mein Vater war lustig
21	Meine Schwester war ärgerlich
14	Ich war hundemüde

8	Es war totale tote Hose
6	Der Busfahrer war rundlich, unfreundlich und pickelig
28	<i>Meine Schwester ist freundlich und sympathisch</i>
20	<i>Meine Mutter ist schüchtern aber hilfsbereit und stolz</i>
23	<i>Ich bin ehrlich und fleißig</i>
25	<i>Matt ist manchmal eifersüchtig</i>
5	<i>Alana ist ab und zu böse aber nie aggressiv</i>
12	<i>Herr Oliver ist streng und vertrauenswürdig</i>
15	Ich werde nächste Woche nach Manchester fahren
29	Wir werden am Samstag gegen Heath Panthers spielen
24	Luke wird nächstes Jahr weiter studieren
30	Ich werde nach den Prüfungen mit meinen Freunden nach Ibiza fahren
11	Wir werden um sieben Uhr morgens abfahren
19	Ich gehe nächsten Samstag ins Kino

Collective memory

Visuals to support teaching of key phrases for 'Pictures from memory'



1. il y a ...	2. où se trouve ...	3. à gauche
4. à droite	5. en haut	6. en bas
7. en face de ...	8. à côté de ...	9. exactement – ah oui, super
10. tu rigoles, toi!	11. je ne vois pas!	12. je pense...

Postcard to use as a 'text from memory'

Paris, le dix septembre
Cher Matthew

Il fait beau ici à Paris. L'hôtel est petit mais confortable. Aujourd'hui, nous sommes allés au centre Pompidou – l'art était très étrange! Demain, on va au tour Eiffel ... Paris est fantastique – nous rentrons à Metz le lundi.

A bientôt, Didier et Jean-Phillipe

à Matthew Elliott
7 Frosterley Lane
Lumley
Co Durham
Angleterre

More Strategies for developing thinking skills

Living graphs' and 'Fortune lines

Example 1: The task for a living graphs approach could involve learners imagining the responses of a variety of other learners, e.g. a learner who hates Bart Simpson, etc. The happy/sad continuum can be used for any sequence of events – from a day during work experience to a day in the life of the learner's pet.

Example 2: Using a fortune line, learners could sequence a series of events during a typical holiday using high-frequency time expressions (7W2). They are then given a graph of the local temperature throughout the holiday and are asked to re-sequence the activities to fit in with the weather and adapt the time indicators accordingly.

Example 3: Historical sequencing through a fortune line enables learners to access Framework objectives (8C2/9C2). For example, learners might be given a series of key points in history and be asked to plot how happy/sad a French, German or Spanish person would be at those various points in history.

Other examples include the following:

- Learners are given a graph which has 'time' along the horizontal axis and 'level of anxiety' on the vertical axis. Learners plot the events leading up to and during a disastrous party.
- Learners are given a graph which illustrates the level of tension in a well known film storyline. They have to place brief statements of plot events accordingly. Repeat this task with statements taken from the plotline of a film or authentic TV programme. Learners have to hypothesise and decide the sequence of events – they can then watch the film/TV programme and see if they were correct.

Reading images

Example: One way of using the strategy to good effect is to exploit a single image, for example, 'Un dimanche après-midi à l'Île de la Grande Jatte' by Georges Seurat.

Give learners an A4 copy of the painting in the middle of an A3 sheet and get them to draw a line from each character in the park (including the dogs) and brainstorm adjectives to describe each of them (7W1/8W1).

- **7W1** How to build and re-apply a stock of words relating to everyday contexts and settings
- **8W1** How to extend their vocabulary and include some abstract items

These can then be collated and displayed. Learners are then placed in groups and decide collaboratively on a series of questions they would like to ask the character (7S4/8S4).

- **7S4** How to formulate a basic question
- **8S4** To understand and use a variety of question types, including some reflecting an attitude or expectation

The questions are practised and refined and another group has to respond with an answer (9S4), either as a written response or a spoken response. Learners are then asked to analyse the answers and to make links back to the picture. Stephen Sondheim's musical 'Sunday in the Park with George' could also be used to add an extra dimension to the characterisation stage, as the first half of the show involves the characters in the painting coming to life, which would provide a link with music.

- **9S4** To use a question as a source of language for an answer

Other examples include the following:

- Give learners photographs of such people in traditional clothing from a range of different countries and ask them to write lists of similarities and differences.
- Learners sequence a series of photographs and create a logical storyline, using the evidence in the images to justify the sequencing.

Summarising:

Here are some alternative summarising strategies:

Example 1: Storytelling strategy

This strategy develops learners' listening and speaking skills whilst still challenging them to summarise accurately. The class is divided into three groups; group 1 consists of 2 able learners, groups 2 and 3 are mixed.

Group 1 listens to a story read by the Foreign Language Assistant or the class teacher (it is important that the rest of the class are actively engaged on another activity at this point, e.g. they are given the title of the text and are asked to speculate about the content).

Group 1 has to give a spoken résumé to group 2 (group 1 decides how they will do this – usually they will take a section of the story each). Group 2 in turn has then to tell the story to group 3 (with group 1 evaluating the story for accuracy). As a final task, all learners work collaboratively to recreate a written summary of the story.

The following is a sample text used with Year 9.

Marie-Cécile parle de son homme idéal: Il est grand, mince, pas trop musclé. Il n'a pas besoin d'être très beau, mais il doit avoir beaucoup de charme! Je l'imagine avec les cheveux courts, bruns, et les yeux bleus. Côté caractère, je voudrais qu'il soit ouvert, honnête, gentil et rigolo, attentionné et généreux. Mon homme idéal aime faire du shopping et me donner des cadeaux, et m'emmener au restaurant. Et il n'aime pas regarder le football à la télé! Comme travail, je pense que mon homme idéal est directeur de banque, comme ça il a beaucoup de l'argent. En plus, il doit être super à la maison: il fait le repassage et il sort la poubelle!

Example 2: Imagery

This involves creating / drawing a series of images.

For further details see Module 12 of the Foundation Subjects folder (DfES 0350/2002) and the task based around the Isabel Allende extract. This can be used to practise and develop strategies for effective summarising.

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